

20 SEP 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
THROUGH : National Intelligence Officer for Warning
FROM : Acting Director, Current Operations
SUBJECT : FEMA's Program Review Task Force Proposes Major
Conceptual Changes in Emergency Planning

1. By White House direction, a Federal Emergency Management Agency task force has been engaged in a detailed review of the national civil preparedness program. The final draft of the task force's report has been forwarded to us for our information. Although we did not participate formally in its preparation, CIA perceptions and responsibilities have been cranked into the review, at least indirectly. Our participation last May in civil defense exercise REX-79 provided the task force useful information. Barring difficulties with the report by White House officials, it is FEMA's intention to put the report's recommendations on the NSC agenda. Highlights of the lengthy report are in the attached executive summary. The following information may be of assistance in relating the report's implications for CIA.

2. The report readily acknowledges that the present emergency preparedness program is ineffective, both operationally and as a positive factor in US nuclear deterrence strategy. The task force proposes a fresh start over the next 5-7 year period which virtually discards traditional arrangements in favor of totally new approaches. In effect, permanent relocation sites supporting the major institutional functions of the federal government give way to highly flexible and covert efforts to support small cadres of senior executives who may go to randomly selected bases upon receipt of strategic warning. In this approach, the current policy of supporting a large number of mini-bureaucracies scattered around the Washington area will be abandoned. Instead of worrying about all phases of preparation -- pre-attack, trans-attack, and post-attack -- the trans-attack period is the major focus. The objective is to maintain the nation's sovereignty in the person of the President or his successors.

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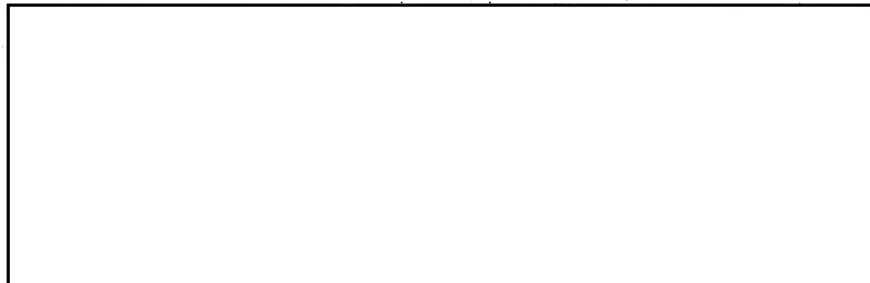
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3. The conceptual changes make it somewhat easier to address the DCI's wartime responsibilities. The task force has been sensitive to the President's three major roles -- chief of state, commander-in-chief, and chief executive. While it is most difficult to conduct all three simultaneously in a nuclear exchange, the conceptual improvements stress the responsibilities of the Secretary of State and DCI in supporting the presidential prerogatives related to chief of state functions. Heretofore, both State and CIA have been relegated to the periphery of wartime decision arrangements because of the dominance of the Department of Defense program -- the National Command Authority decision process. The NCA program is by far the most effective and costly preparedness contingency plan. Despite DoD's recognition of the DCI's potential contribution to the NCA, the program is a departmental one and makes little allowance for communications and staff representing civilian intelligence and policy components. Even if the DCI was an integral adviser to the NCA, he would have little capability at present to communicate independently with his own resources elsewhere or seek the advice of an accompanying staff. The FEMA report clarifies these difficulties, and most importantly, gives equal weight to all three presidential roles in a nuclear crisis.

4. There is one other significant complication in the DCI's wartime role. Besides the NCA program, the White House itself manages a compartmented program to ensure the survival of the President and Vice President in a nuclear crisis. Neither FEMA or other departments are privy to the mechanics and details of these White House contingency arrangements. Cabinet-level officers or others who may accompany the President or Vice President in these circumstances are not identified to their respective supporting elements. FEMA's responsibilities extend only to presidential successors below the Vice President. In effect, the DCI could be asked to accompany the President or Vice President to an undisclosed White House site. If this scenario should occur, we are not aware of any prior planning at CIA to support the DCI. In summary, the DCI can be involved in three contingency plans. Two are departmental -- White House and DoD -- and one is national -- the FEMA arrangements.

5. If FEMA's recommendations are approved, the following changes would occur:

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may recall that CIA already has selected five primary officers and five alternates for this program. Though only a paper exercise at the moment, these interagency cadres will become the building blocks for an expanded program of this nature.

- Several hundred sites, perhaps even 2-3 thousand, would be pre-selected for a national network of potential relocation bases for [redacted] cadre (a nation-wide racetrack). People with the appropriate experience and talents are transplanted, not necessarily institutional authority. This concept enables relocation efforts to be highly flexible and adaptive.

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- The major obstacle in implementing this program aside from cost is telecommunications. Not highlighted in the report's summary, telecommunications support is covered thoroughly in an annex. Because of corporate competition and different technologies in the civil telecommunications system, any effort to interrelate these systems with the military command, control, communications and intelligence (C³I) systems becomes a technical nightmare. Since communications resources in the civil sector would form the backbone of a nation-wide covert relocation program, this portion of the task force's recommendations is a long-term proposition.

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Attachment

All paragraphs in the memo
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